



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 16.8

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| Subject: | Responsibilities of Approved Resource Homes |
| Authority: | TCA 37-5-106, 37-4-201, 37-4-201 et seq., Adoption and Safe Families Act, P.L. 109-239, Safe and Timely Interstate Placement Act of Children in Foster Care Act of 2006 - P.L. 109-239, and Social Security Act |
| Standards: | DCS 3-201, 6-512C, 6-400, 6-401, 7-100A, 7-101A, 7-103A, 7-104A, 7-203A |
| Application: | DCS Foster Care and Supervisory Staff |

Policy Statement:

All approved resource parents, including those involved with the [Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children \(ICPC\)](#), must serve children in their home in accordance with current TN Department of Children's Services (DCS) Policies and Procedures and must partner with DCS in the development and implementation of the child's permanency plan. DCS and the children it serves expect resource parents to actively support the identified permanency plan goal and promote positive relationships between children and their birth families by participating in meaningful visitation and serving as a positive role model. All approved resource parents must complete fifteen (15) hours of in-service training each year and have their home re-assessed annually.

Purpose:

DCS must ensure its resource parents remain capable of providing safety, permanence, and well being for the children placed in their care and that they continue to serve children in their home in accordance with current DCS Policies and Procedure. It is the responsibility of resource parents and DCS to assist in providing safety, permanence, and well being for children; to support the permanency plan, and to be respectful of and help preserve the history and culture of the children placed in their homes. DCS must remain aware of the resource family circumstances in order to provide them with support to care for children placed in their home.

Procedures:

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| A. Responsibilities of Resource Parents | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approved resource parent(s) must comply with all DCS policies and procedures or concepts discussed in <i>Parents as Tender Healers</i> (PATH) training.2. All household rules must be clearly communicated to the child and written down for the child who is old enough to read and understand. The structured daily household routine provided for the child may include:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Clear and concise household rules,b) Identified acceptable and unacceptable behavior,c) Possible consequences for unacceptable behavior |
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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. A child must not be allowed to leave the supervision of the resource parent(s) for extended visits or taken outside the State of Tennessee without prior written approval. The resource parent may approve short outings or overnight visits with family and friends of the resource parents. (See Guidelines for Outings and Overnight Stays for additional information.) 4. The Placement Services Division (PSD)/Private Provider staff must be notified, within one (1) working day, of any significant changes in the home (i.e., new address, additional persons living in the household, health, income etc.). Failure to report any significant changes could affect the status of the resource home and may result in termination of foster care board payments and possibly an overpayment assessment. 5. Should a child run away from the resource home, the resource parent must ensure the Family Service Worker (FSW) has the information needed to complete the <i>Absconder Recovery Runaway/Escapee Checklist, form CS-0706</i> as soon as it is known that the child has run away. 6. Resource Parents must provide DCS staff with verification of current auto insurance coverage following each renewal. 7. The resource parent(s) must not petition to adopt, obtain guardianship, or file for custody of a child in their home unless DCS concurs with the plan and gives written approval. 8. All resource homes must submit a <i>Resource Family Disaster Plan, CS-0871</i>, to their Placement Services Division (PSD)/Private Provider. |
| B. Health Needs | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The child's health needs must be monitored and arrangements made for the child to receive routine medical and dental treatment necessary, after discussing these needs with the FSW. Appointments must be made in accordance with DCS Policies 20.12, Dental Services and 20.7 TENNderCare Initial and Annual Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment Standards (EPSDT). 2. In a medical emergency, the resource parents must immediately obtain emergency assistance for the child, and notify the FSW/Private Provider or PSD staff as soon as possible. 3. The resource parent(s) must ensure that each child's nutritional needs are met and are encouraged to provide well-balanced meals. Families are also encouraged to accommodate the child's cultural norms when planning the child's menus. 4. When children have appointments resource parents should have the <i>Health Services Confirmation and Follow up, Form CS-0689</i> and request that the service provider complete the form. If received from the provider, the resource parent should give a copy to the FSW. 5. Resource parents will follow all doctors' orders for each child in their care and will make no changes in a child's treatment unless approved by the physician. 6. Resource parents should maintain <i>form CS-0630, Resource Home Prescription Medication Record</i> for each child placed in their care that is prescribed medication. The medication record should be updated on a daily basis or as deemed necessary by the prescription and turned into the child's |

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| | <p>FSW each month to be filed in the case record.</p> <p>7. In cases of ICPC a copy of the Resource Home Prescription Medication Record, form CS-0630 submitted to the FSW becomes part of the child's ICPC record.</p> <p>8. Children who may require hospitalization are expected to return to their resource home once released by medical staff. Once back in the home, the resource parents must maintain follow up care as directed by the treating physician.</p> |
| C. Clothing and Allowance | <p>1. When a child enters state custody, DCS staff must make every effort to attempt to obtain the child's clothing from the parents or guardians following the removal. If the child's clothing is inadequate, DCS will provide an initial clothing outlay in the following amount:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 0 through 2 years - \$125 ◆ 3 through 4 years - \$175 ◆ 5 through 12 years - \$200 ◆ 13 years and over - \$250 <p>2. The team leader may approve extra clothing outlays in emergency situations. These situations must be thoroughly documented in the child's case recordings and/or in TN Kids (i.e. weight loss, growth spurts, etc.).</p> <p>3. The Family Service Worker must complete the authorization for the purchase of clothing and submit form CS-0493, Standard Claim Invoice, in compliance with fiscal policy and procedure.</p> <p>4. Resource parents should give children an allowance at a rate consistent with the child's age and developmental status.</p> <p>5. Routine clothing maintenance and a personal allowance is expected to be provided from the monies provided via the resource home board payment, as outlined in DCS Policy, 16.29 Resource Home Board Rates.</p> <p>6. Children placed with a relative, in an unpaid resource home placement or a placement which does not receive a foster care board payment, are also eligible for a personal allowance. These allowances can be paid with flex funds.</p> <p>7. In cases of ICPC, the procedure described above applies to DCS children who are placed into another State under the ICPC. The financial responsibilities for any child placed into TN under the ICPC including responsibility for clothing, allowance or the resource home board payment is that of the Sending State, not TN DCS.</p> |
| D. Education | <p>1. All school age children must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Be enrolled in an accredited school setting; b) Must attend school daily; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) Have their attendance monitored, and d) Have their education needs met in accordance with DCS Policy 21.14, Serving the Educational needs of the Child/Youth in DCS Custody. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Any problems regarding the child's schoolwork should be discussed with the school personnel and the Family Service Worker. 3. Resource parents are encouraged to attend all multidisciplinary team (M-Team) meetings, Individual Education Plan (IEP) development and/or and other school related meetings for the children in their care. 4. Non-traditional school program enrollment may only be approved as outlined in DCS Policy 21.14, Serving the Educational needs of the Child/Youth in DCS Custody. 5. Children/youth in DCS custody who have earned a high school diploma or GED must have their vocational and/or post secondary educational interest addressed as outlined in DCS Policy 16.51, Interdependent Living Plan. |
| E. Discipline | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource parent(s) must strive to maintain appropriate discipline of the child by correcting the child's behavior when necessary and discussing any problems with the FSW in collaboration with PSD staff/private provider staff. 2. Resource parents and all staff responsible for the care of children in DCS custody must adhere to the guidelines outlined in DCS Policy 25.10, Behavioral Management. 3. Resource parents must complete Fostering Positive Behavior training. 4. In accordance with the DCS discipline policy, the following forms of punishment must not be used with children in DCS custody: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Corporal Punishment such as slapping, spanking, or hitting with any object, b) Excessive exercising (particularly of a military nature), running laps, repetitive sit-ups, etc. c) Cruel and unusual punishment d) Assignment of excessive or inappropriate work e) Denial of meals and daily needs f) Verbal abuse, ridicule or humiliation g) Permitting a child to punish another child h) Chemical or mechanical restraints such as use of psychotropic medications as a restraint i) Denial of planned visits, telephone calls, or mail contact with birth family, attorney, siblings, Family Service Worker, pre-adoptive family, or attorney j) Seclusion as a punishment k) Threat of removal from the resource home l) Any punishment that occurs more than 24 hours after the incident. If the incident is discovered after that timeframe, the consequences are to be |

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| | age appropriate. |
| F. Routine Transportation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Routine travel is included in the daily foster care board rate and is an expectation of being a resource parent. 2. When frequent transportation is required, (i.e. multiple appointments, alternative school, etc.) the Child and Family Team will discuss and determine the responsibilities of each member. 3. The Family Service Worker or Placement Services Division staff can approve reimbursement for trips over fifty (50) miles one-way or multiple trips made within a week, that is beyond the normal care of a child, at the regular state travel rate. If multiple trips, for specific special need conditions, were factored into a special or extraordinary board rate approval, only travel over fifty (50) miles one-way made for <u>other</u> purposes may be claimed. 4. The Regional Administrator/designee can approve requests for unique situations, however, resource parents should discuss these unique situations with the FSW/PSD before the trip is made and the travel claim is submitted. 5. In cases of ICPC, transportation management including costs/reimbursements affiliated with provision of transportation for children placed into TN under the ICPC is the planning and financial responsibility of the Sending State. TN DCS is not responsible to provide funding regarding transportation for children who are under the jurisdiction of another state, therefore travel claims should not be submitted to the state of Tennessee. |
| G. Extra-Curricular Activities | <p>The child's extracurricular activities should be encouraged and monitored.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource parent(s) should consider a child's age and developmental level when approving extracurricular activities. 2. Resource parents should also assist the child in making wise choices in choosing extracurricular activities. 3. Information regarding children's activities should be regularly communicated with birth family members. 4. DCS will make efforts to request the consent of birth parents when special activities arise, however DCS may give consent or authorize the resource parents to give permission for special activities. |
| H. Religion | Resource families should make accommodations for children to participate in the religion and/or faith of their choice. |
| I. Case Planning Participation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource parents are vital partners to the Department and the Child and Family Team. Resource parents should participate in case planning by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Attending and participating in Child and Family Team Meetings. b) Providing input to case decisions and permanency plans. c) Supporting the implementation of those plans. |

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| | <p>2. In cases of ICPC, the responsibility for the development and initiation of Permanency Plans for children placed into TN under the ICPC is that of the Sending State. Any resource in TN wherein a child is placed is to participate in appropriate planning activities developed separately by the Sending State and/or in partnership with the Receiving State.</p> |
| J. Shared Parenting | <p>Resource parents should share planning and caring for children with members of the Child and Family Team including the birth parents, DCS, and private providers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When parental rights are intact, shared parenting must take place through direct contact with the birth family, unless otherwise indicated by a decision of the Child and Family Team.2. Resource parents must assist the child's Family Service Worker and actively support the quality visitation plan outlined in the child's permanency plan.3. If parental rights have been terminated or surrendered, the resource parent must accept the child's feelings about the birth family and demonstrate this through their parenting. |
| K. Life Book Maintenance | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Children in DCS custody should have a life story book to document and preserve their history during the time they are in care, to help them understand their current situation, and to help them process the feelings they may have around significant life events.2. The Family Service Worker should assist the resource parent in creating and maintaining life books for all children placed in their home. (See: Guidelines For Life Story Books.)3. The FSW/Private Provider staff should assist resource parents with access to basic life book supplies. Staff should consult with their team leader regarding how to acquire these supplies. Each region will establish a process to acquire life book supplies and ensure that information regarding access to the supplies is communicated to team leaders.4. The Life Book is the property of the child and must travel with the child any time there is a placement change. |
| L. Initial Mandatory In-Service Training Topics | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All new resource parents are required to complete fifteen (15) hours of in-service training within twelve (12) months following the date the family was approved.2. The required in-service core training courses for newly approved social services resource parents include:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Discipline – 3 hoursb) Sexual abuse – 3 hoursc) Cultural competency – 3 hours |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Working with birth parents – 3 hours e) Education – 2 hours f) Elective – 1 hour <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. All approved resource parents will also be required to complete Medication Administration, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid training once capacity for training delivery is established within the Department. Families will receive notice when this requirement takes effect and are encouraged to obtain this training in the community. 4. Families who parent Juvenile Justice youth must also complete 9-hours Juvenile Justice specific training prior to placement of children identified as medium or high risk, as determined by the Community Risk Assessment. The Juvenile Justice curriculum is not required prior to placement of a child identified as a low risk. 4. Some Private Providers may include these courses in the initial pre-service resource parent training, in which case the family would not be required to repeat them as in-service requirements. |
| M. Additional In-Service Training Requirements | <p>After the completion of the initial in-service curriculum, resource parents may select the training topics based on their interests and needs, provided they have completed all the required courses. Each resource parent must complete fifteen (15) hours of in-service training each year, <u>per approval/re-assessment date</u>, to remain in good standing. If at all possible, couples are encouraged to participate in training together. In-Service training credit may be obtained in various ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance at the annual, regional foster/adoptive training conference. 2. Attendance at the annual conference of the Tennessee Foster Care Association (TFACA). 3. Special workshops on specific topics are offered through local foster care associations in conjunction with their meetings. Also, training staff and/or Central Office program staff are available to conduct policy training for resource parent workshops. 4. Independent living training is available for resource parents and staff who work with adolescents to prepare them for life on their own. 5. Resource parents may also access up to 5 hours of computer-based training per year, via the Internet. Training hours related to reading books and reporting to the PSD staff will be limited to three (3) hours per year. 6. Other training options include special events offered by school systems, mental health facilities, and other public service resources. Journals, magazine articles, videotapes, and books may be used for individual study. The PSD staff may offer suggestions and help to provide these resources. |
| N. Resource Home Addendum Requirements | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An addendum to the home study must be done within five working days of notice(see form CS-0773, Resource Home Addendum) that there has been any significant change in the family, including but not limited to, a |

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| | <p>change in the type or number of children for which the family is approved. The addendum must be approved by the Team Leader and entered into TNKIDS.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. An Internet Record Clearance and complete local criminal background check must be done within one (1) working day if any adults enter the home and will be residing there for more than fourteen (14) days. Fingerprinting must also be arranged immediately following the notice that there are new adult household members. 3. Resource homes that have new adults residing in the home that have not had a local background check and an internet record clearance, may not be paid and run the risk of a possible overpayment assessment. |
| O. Resource Homes Re-Assessments | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All resource homes are to be reassessed no less than annually, from the date of approval, in order to maintain active status. The reassessment process consists of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) A home visit by the PSD or Private Provider Agency Staff; b) Annual completion of form CS-0668, Authorization for Release of Information; c) Verification of a valid driver's license, current vehicle registration, vehicle liability insurance and proof of county inspection is also required (if applicable). d) Annual local Criminal and General Sessions Court records check. e) An annual Internet Records Clearance, form CS-0687, must be completed for all household members age eighteen (18) years or older which includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A Methamphetamine Offender Registry Clearance must be conducted for the prospective caregiver(s) and all adult household members using the Internet. The Internet Website address is: http://www.tennesseeanytime.org/methor ◆ A state and national Sexual Offender Registry Clearance must be conducted for the prospective caregiver(s) and all adult household members using the Internet. The Website address for a TN search is: http://www.ticic.state.tn.us/SEX_ofndr/search_short.asp. The Internet Web site address for a national search is: http://www.nsopr.gov/ ◆ A TN Felony Offender Database Clearance must be conducted for the prospective caregiver(s) and all adult household members using the Internet. The Website address is http://www.tennesseeanytime.org/foil/search.jsp. ◆ An Abuse Registry Clearance must be completed for the prospective caregiver(s) and all adult household members using the Internet. The Website address is- http://health.state.tn.us/abuseregistry/index.html%20 |

- f) Record search results on form **CS-0741, Database Search Results**.
 - g) Annual review of **form CS-0553, Discipline Policy** with new signature by the resource parent (s).
 - h) Annual review of **form CS-0673, Oath of Confidentiality** with new signature (s) by the resource parent (s).
 - i) Annual review of **form CS-0670, Oath to Report Child Abuse or Neglect and to Abide by Child Safety Restraint Laws** with new signature by the resource parent (s).
 - j) Annual completion of **form CS-0431, Monthly Family Financial Income and Expenditures** and collection of income verification documentation.
 - k) Completion of **form CS-0692, Resource Home Mutual Reassessment** with the resource parents. This document must be reviewed and signed by the Team Leader. The date of the signature of the Team Leader is the re-assessment date.
 - l) Completion of **form CS-0707, Annual Resource Parent Medical Self Report** is required to ascertain the continuing health status of each resource parent. Should any changes be reported, **form CS-0678, Resource Parent Medical Report**, must be completed.
 - m) The PSD staff must ensure the Resource Home section of TN Kids is current.
 - n) The PSD staff must also ensure the family's status is maintained in the Resource Exchange for Adoptable Children in Tennessee (REACT).
 - o) The PSD staff must complete a new **CS-0702, Resource Parent Approval**, for all families, who remain in good standing, following their annual re-assessment.
 - p) Some families wish to continue serving as resource parents following the finalization of an adoption. In those cases, an addendum reflecting the change in the family must be added to the most recent home study. This addendum must be completed within thirty (30) days of the finalized adoption, or the home must be closed.
2. Resource parents who wish to re-activate their closed resource home status or have their resource home re-classified (ie, shared home agreement, transfer of a resource home between agencies, etc.). [Protocol for Re-Activation or Re-Classification of Resource Homes](#) should be followed.

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| Forms: | <p><u>CS-0675, Resource Family Cover Sheet</u></p> <p><u>CS-0630, Resource Home Prescription Medication Record</u></p> <p><u>CS-0668, Authorization for Release of information</u></p> <p><u>CS-0687, Internet Records Clearance</u></p> <p><u>CS- 0431, Monthly Income & Expenditures Form</u></p> <p><u>CS-0689, Health Services Confirmation and Follow up Notification</u></p> <p><u>CS-0673, Oath of Confidentiality</u></p> <p><u>CS-0670, Oath to Report Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect and to Abide by Child Safety Restraint Laws</u></p> <p><u>CS-0553, Discipline Policy</u></p> <p><u>CS-0692, Resource Home Mutual Re-assessment</u></p> <p><u>CS-0707, Annual Resource Parent Medical Self Report</u></p> <p><u>CS-0678, Resource Parent Medical Report</u> (if Applicable)</p> <p><u>CS-0702, Resource Parent Approval</u></p> <p><u>CS-0493, Standard Claim Invoice</u></p> <p><u>CS-0685, Resource Home Update Checklist</u> (If Applicable)</p> <p><u>CS-0706, Runaway/Escapee Checklist</u> (If Applicable)</p> <p><u>CS-0698, REACT Status Form</u> (if applicable)</p> <p><u>CS-0741, Data Base Search Results</u></p> <p><u>CS-0773, Resource Home Addendum</u></p> <p><u>CS-0845 Background Checklist and Results Summary</u></p> <p><u>CS- 0871 Resource Family Disaster Plan</u></p> <p><u>Note: Private Provider agencies may use equivalent forms, provided the content of the forms capture the content of the forms listed above.</u></p> |
| Collateral Documents: | <p><u>Protocol for Re-Activation or Re-Classification of Resource Homes</u></p> <p>Foster Parent Handbook</p> <p>Local Police Check Results</p> <p>Proof of all Reported Income</p> <p>Community Risk Assessment (When Applicable)</p> <p><u>Attachment 4 Foster Care Associations</u></p> <p><u>Attachment 2 Guidelines For Outings and Overnight Stays</u></p> <p><u>Attachment 1 Guidelines For Supplemental Respite Care</u></p> <p><u>Attachment 3 Guidelines For Life Story Books</u></p> |

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| Glossary: | |
| <i>Placement Services Division</i> | A DCS term is used to identify a combined division which include staff previously know as Foster Parent Support Unit or Residential Case Management Staff, Resource Managers, and Recruiters. This newly formed division is responsible for recruitment of DCS Resources Families, support to DCS Resource Families, and Placement of all children in DCS custody within a region, including referrals to private provider agencies. Currently, there are regions that have yet to fully develop this combined group. |
| <i>Family Service Worker</i> | A DCS term used to identify the position previously known as the DCS Case Manager or Home County Case Manager. This person is principally responsible for the case and has the primary responsibility of building, preparing, supporting and maintaining the Child and Family Team as the child and family move to permanence. |